Backward Classes in the higher echelons of judiciary and if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI): (a) and (b) As on 15.2.1999 there were 25 Judges in the Supreme Court of India and 442 Judges/ Additional Judges in position in various High Courts of the country.

There being no reservation in the matter of appointment of Judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts on the basis of caste or class of persons, information is not maintained separately for caste or class etc. The Government have, however, addressed letters to the Chief Ministers of the States and the Chief Justices of the High Courts from time to time requesting them to locate suitable persons from the Bar belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Minorities and Women for appointment as High Court Judges.

Proposals for creation of Legislative Councils in States

117. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the States where Legislative Councils are functioning at present and since when;

(b) the States from which proposals for creation of Legislative Councils has been received by the Ministry;

(c) the present status of such proposals;

(d) whether there is any such proposal from the Government of Assam in this regard; and

(e) if so, by when the same would be given effect to?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI): (a) The requisite information is being collected and would be laid on the Table of the House.

(b) to (e) The proposals for revival/ creation of Legislative Councils have been received from the States of Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Assam. No decision has yet been taken in the matter.

National Judicial Academy

118. SHRI SHIBU SOREN: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are contemplating to form National Judicial Academy soon;

(b) if so, the details of its aim and objectives, its constitution, membership, power, etc.; and

(c) by what time the same would be established?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI): (a) and (c) The Government has set up a National Judicial Academy, which is registered as a Society, with effect from August 17, 1993. The Academy is located at Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh with its registered office at New Delhi. The complex of the Academy, which is under construction, is expected to be completed by December, 1999. The Academy, which is at present functioning on a limited basis from its registered office in New Delhi, will become fully operational after the construction of its complex is completed and the requisite officers and staff are in position.

(b) The membership of the Academy is confined to the Chief Justice of India (ex-officio chairman), two puisne judges of the Supreme Court of India, Chief Justice of a High Court, one Judge of another High Court and two law academics. Secretaries to the Government of India in the Department of Justice, Department of Legal Affairs, Department of Personnel & Training, Department of Expenditure and Registrar General, Supreme Court of India are its ex-officio members.

The aim and objectives of the Academy, *inter-alia,* include providing training and continuing education to Judicial Officers of States/UTs as well as to the ministerial officers of Supreme Court of India, conduct of study and research in matters relating to court management and administration of justice including publication of papers, books, journals in this regard, to organise conferences, seminars and lectures, to enhance the